



**The Omen  
loves you**

# Table of Contents

*For the first issue in the 34th Volume of the Omen on February the 5th in the Year of our Lord 2010*

|                              |    |
|------------------------------|----|
| Dear Jason                   | 6  |
| Excerpts from the Quotebook  | 13 |
| Hampbabwe                    | 17 |
| The Price of a Heart         | 18 |
| Lessons of love              | 20 |
| Rules of Hampshire           | 21 |
| Everybody Stand Back         | 22 |
| Law School Application Essay | 23 |



## To Submit:

Submissions are due always, constantly, so submit forever. You can submit in rich text or plain text format by CD, Flash Drive, singing telegram, carrier pigeon, paper airplane, Fed-Ex, Pony Express, or email. Get your submissions to Evan Silberman, Enfield 71A, box 1394, [ej07@hampshire.edu](mailto:ej07@hampshire.edu).

*"I'm at the Pizza Hut. I'm at the Taco Bell.  
I'm at the combination Pizza Hut and Taco Bell."*

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|--------------------|----------------------------------|
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| Magdalen Silberman | <i>Magic!</i>                    |
| David Axel Kurtz   | <i>4chan was down</i>            |
| Stephen Morton     | <i>Gullibility</i>               |
| Margaret McGrew    | <i>Grown in tanks</i>            |
| Ian McEwen         | <i>Boredom</i>                   |

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# EDITORIAL

## Love?

by Margaret McGrew

This semester the Omen will be shiny and new. Well, not new, but shiny. And it will exist. And all will be well and Hampshire will go forward into the future!

But seriously, the Omen is important. It is important because as long as you are a Hampshire student, you have a voice. And with the Omen, you can use that voice to say anything. It won't be rejected, no matter how silly, obtuse, ridiculous, badly drawn, or badly thought out. The Omen is a bundle of Hampshire voices talking about a bizarre mix of random crap, crap that makes us laugh or seethe or just stare blankly. It gets filled with what Hampshire is thinking about and ranting about. And if it doesn't, that's your fault for not submitting.

I have started going through the Omen archives and putting them in order and hopefully getting them put online. And they're all different, and strange, and kind of wonderful, and since I'm still back in the 90s, feel totally alien. These issues have been stuck in filing cabinets and in boxes and they've stuck around, and now I can look at what people were thinking and feeling about Hampshire

more than ten years ago.

Think about the storm of articles that happened during Action Awareness Week, the did we divest from Israel kerfluffle, or the is Ralph Hexter going to take away our evaluations explosion. The issues that those articles were published in are in the filing cabinets and boxes I am going through, and will hopefully be online by the end of the semester for anyone to access (probably through a mailing list). And they will last, and ten years from now Hampshire students could, if they felt like it, go back and read those and find out about the things that made us angry or excited or bored. Each article becomes a snapshot into something someone at Hampshire was thinking, and that is unique and important.

Get involved! Submit, or come to layout. Or do both! The Omen has been bad at existing because too few people have been available to work on it. So come make the Omen shiny. The Omen loves you. Don't you think it's time you loved it back? 🙄

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## Policy

The Omen is a biweekly publication that is the world's only example of the consistent application of a straightforward policy: we publish all signed submissions from members of the Hampshire community that are not libelous. Send us your impassioned yet poorly-thought-out rants, self-insertion fan fiction, MS Paint comics, and whiny emo poetry: we'll publish it all, and we're happy to do it. The Omen is about giving you a voice, no matter how little you deserve it. Since its founding in December of 1992 by Stephanie Cole, the Omen has hardly ever missed an issue, making it Hampshire's longest-running publication.

Your Omen submission (you're submitting right now, right?) might not be edited,

and we can't promise any spellchecking either, so any horrendous mistakes are your fault, not ours. We do promise not to insert comical spelling mistakes in submissions to make you look foolish. Your submission must include your real name: an open forum comes with a responsibility to take ownership of your views. (Note: Views expressed in the Omen do not necessarily reflect the views of the Omen editor, the Omen staff, or anyone, anywhere, living or dead.)

The Omen staff consists of whoever shows up for Omen layout, which usually takes place on alternate Friday nights in the basement of Merrill on a computer with an extremely inadequate monitor. You should come. We don't bite. You can find the Omen on other Fridays in Saga, the post office, or on the door of your mod.

*The Omen Haiku*

**Views in the Omen (5)**

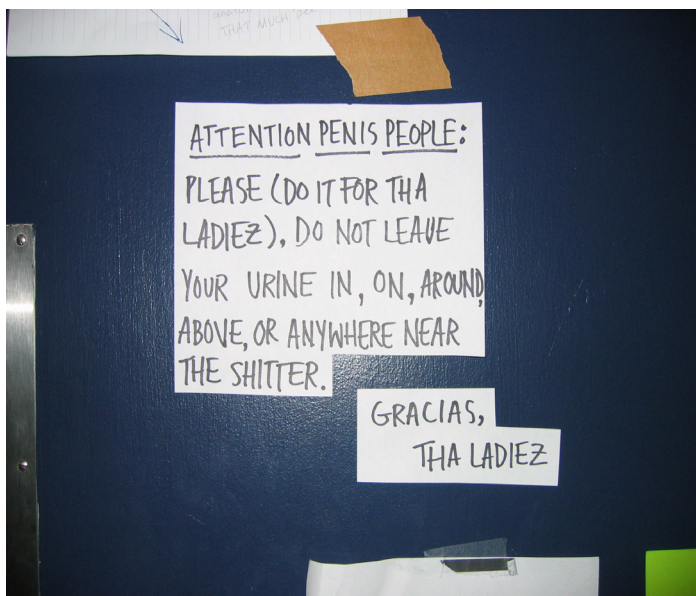
**Do not necessarily (7)**

**Reflect the staff's views (5)**

# SECTION HATE

## If You Must Expel Your Stomach Just Go To F2

A Brief Documentary of Bathroom Politics by Jalana Sloatman

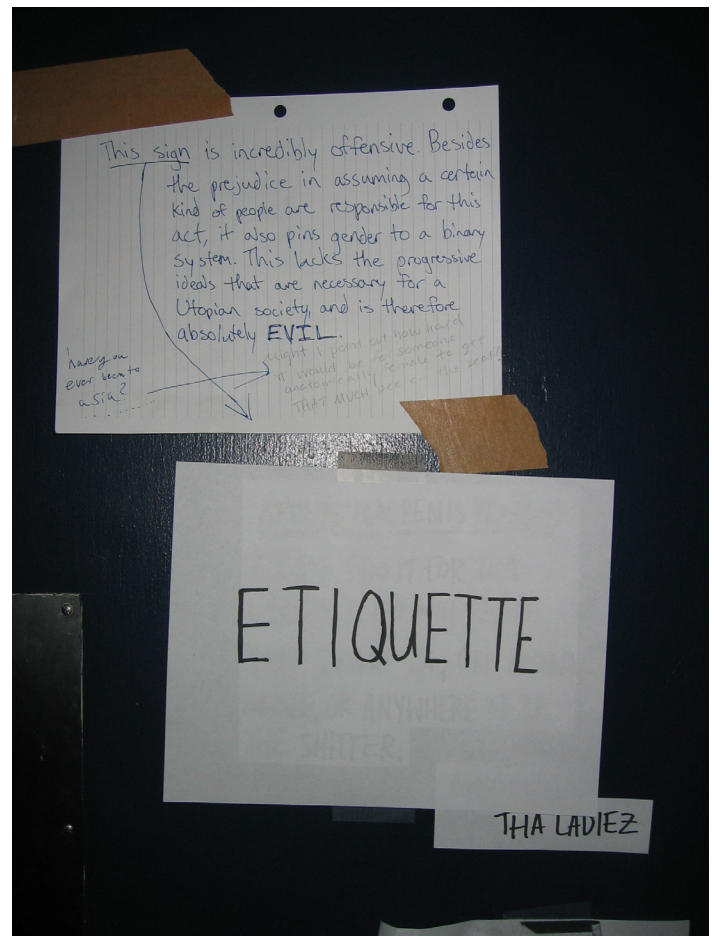


It started slowly. Just a single sign on the bathroom door of E2. It read:

“ATTENTION PENIS PEOPLE: PLEASE (DO IT FOR THA LADIEZ), DO NOT LEAVE YOUR URINE IN, ON, AROUND, ABOVE, OR ANYWHERE NEAR THE SHITTER. GRACIAS, THA LADIEZ”

Now, I consider myself to be one of “THA LADIEZ” and personally, this sign was a welcome reaction to the long tradition of having to clean up other people’s urine before using the toilet. Then again, the E2 bathroom has never been a model of cleanliness. We’re attempting to create a tribble in our showers. I expect that when it comes to life (currently it is in the inanimate form of a wad of human hair), it will be due to the increasing complexity

of the life-forms currently inhabiting our shower tile. Despite all this, though, the PENIS PEOPLE sign attracted a rather negative reaction, in the form of a new sign, posted above it.



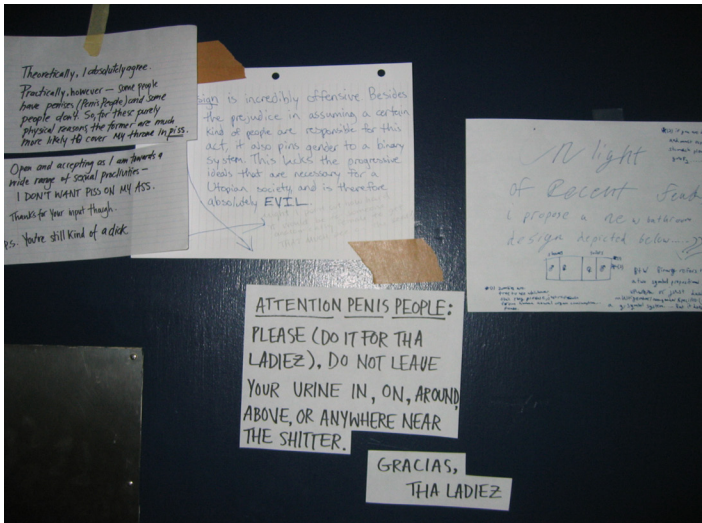
“This sign” (arrow to the the PP sign), “is incredibly offensive. Besides the prejudice in assuming a certain kind of people are responsible for this act, it also pins gender to a binary system. This lacks the progressive ideals that are necessary for a Utopian society, and is therefore absolutely **EVIL**.”

This, of course, drew a reply (scrawled in pencil at the bottom of the newest sign): “might I point out how hard it would be for someone anatomically female to get THAT MUCH pee on the

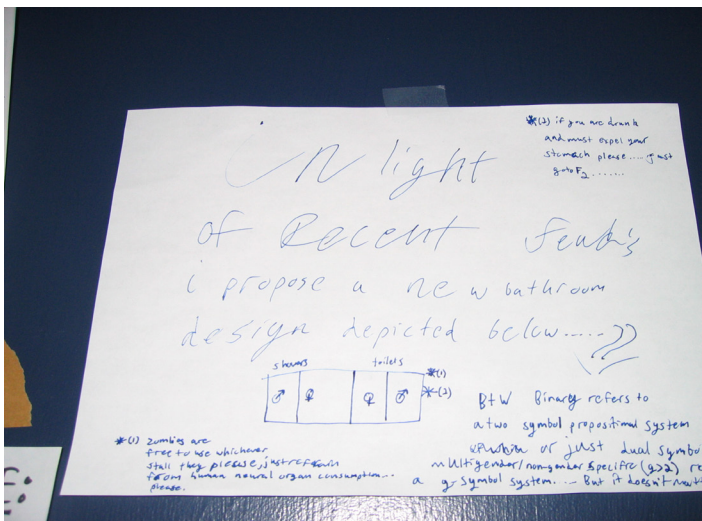


seat?” This is when I decided that it might be worth documenting the rapidly changing state of the bathroom door. I embarked on a mission to photograph each phase.

However, the next time I checked the door, I found that the signs had changed in two ways. First, there was a reply to the pencil note, which read: “have you ever been to asia? .....” and secondly, a new paper had been put over the original PP posting it read, simply: “ETIQUETTE”.



It didn't end with the plea for common courtesy, oh no. Not long after this, there was a new sign up. It was taped up alongside the original condemnation of the PP posting, and said: “Theoretically, I absolutely agree. Practically, however – some people have penises (Penis People) and some people don't. So, for these purely physical reasons, the former are much more likely to cover my throne in piss. Open and accepting as I am towards a wide range of sexual proclivities – I DON'T WANT PISS ON MY ASS. Thanks for the input, though. P.S. You're still kind of a dick.”



## Volume 34, Issue 1 • The Omen

Along with this new declaration, the **ETTIQUETTE** sign had been removed to reveal the original sign, and another sign had been posted: “in light of recent feuds i propose a new bathroom design depicted below..... => BtW Binary refers to a two symbol propositional system or just dual symbolism. multigender/non-gender specific (g>2) requires a g-symbol system. ....But it doesn't matter....” At the bottom of the page was a diagram of E2's current bathroom, in which each of the shower and toilet stalls had been labeled with either a male or female symbol. Two asterisks had been added to it. “\*(1) zombies are free to use whichever stall they please, just refrain from human neutral organ consumption... please” and “\*(2) if you are drunk and must expel your stomach please.....just go to F2.....”



By this point, I was watching with amusement (my room is right by the bathroom) as people came and went through the door, pausing to read the signs on their way, and (if they were in a group) commenting on them. They'd read the sign silently, then start discussing it – “I'm curious, what's behind this? Is there pee everywhere?” – then they'd give into curiosity and open the door. “It's just a bathroom; well-designed, well-maintained. It's just a bathroom.” As I said above, I'd contest the well-maintained part (note the onions clogging the sink drain), but it's fundamentally true. Finally, I overheard a heated discussion of gender politics, and whether one side or the other of the PENIS PEOPLE war was more politically incorrect (or just plain rude) than the other. At long last, there was a silence, followed by the sound of crumpling paper receding down the hall to a recycling bin. The door had been once more restored to its original, politically correct, state.



# SECTION **SPEAK**

## Dear Jason by Victoria Quine

Preface: this is a true story. It's also in letter format because one of my friends (Jason) was in Afghanistan for a while so I made sure to write to him regularly. This story was just too good to hand write and risk losing overseas, so I wrote it first on my computer and then copied it for him. I am, however, entirely too lazy and ended up not quite finishing it in as much detail as I started. Bear with me and appreciate what you get.

Alrighty, so this is the letter I promised I'd write ages ago, and I never got around to finishing it, but here's most of it:

Dear Jason,

It has been a while since I've had the time/energy to write, but I am going to make it worth your while. Here is the story of my weekend, which I am planning on submitting to The Omen, which is Hampshire's uncensored magazine. I figured every new school year needs a "What I Did on My Summer Vacation" story. Admittedly, I think for the audience of The Omen, a "Who I Did on My Summer vacation" story would go over even better, but this is a pretty damn good story, as far as stories go.

Okay, I would really like to start this story with a not quite related story, but one that I quite enjoyed anyway. Alright so, my friend Lora from Australia (well, she's Welsh and moved to Australia when she was 12 or so) came to the US to visit and so stayed with me for the weekend. I took her to Chicken Rock (I dunno if you've been there; it's a gorgeous place in Redding across from a middle school) and we played in the waterfalls. I quite like climbing up the center of waterfalls because of the challenge in rock climbing mixed with endless gallons of rushing water. Now, the waterfall at Chicken Rock isn't huge, but it is big enough. I managed to lose grip of the rocks and was promptly tossed down part of the waterfall, hitting every rock on the way down with every part of my

body except, quite fortunately, my head. I managed to grab a handhold at the last second before actually tumbling the biggest part. It was quite thrilling to wrestle with the water and win, in spite of coming out fairly banged up.

Saturday evening rolls around, and Lora mentions how she would quite like to go out to a bar to mess with people, as we enjoy doing. So I call up Kristyn, since she's the only person I know who knows where to go out in Bethel. However, she was going out to The Spot that night, which just didn't sound good. Cut to the scene in which Lora and I are standing in front of the mirrors in sparkly dresses (hers pink, mine black lace) and applying facepaint with eyeliner and bright blue eyeshadow. And of course, what sparkly-facepainted girl is complete without cherry red Doc Martins? Into the car we go, armed with our juggling clubs...just in case. Off to Main Street Danbury, with the intention to just walk into a bar and see where our night goes. Unfortunately, we had no money for the cover charge for our first choice, so our fruitless trip to find a bank eventually brought us past Billy Baloney's, a music joint in which a band was rehearsing with their manager and a friend in attendance. This friend, Rosa, leaned out of the door and yelled to us "FAIRIES! FAIRIES, come dance!". This invitation presented two options: and we went with the most unpredictable. We went in. We went into the enormous, empty, smoky room and danced like creatures possessed while the band played some music that had something to do with really violent or sexually graphic themes. I believe the chorus to one of the earlier songs was "Jump up and grab my balls!", for example. We continued to dance, and entertained Rosa's requests of "Take your hair down! Let me see your hair!" Eventually the band paused and asked us what we were up to this evening. Another turning point in the road: I responded in a French accent, to compliment Lora's Welsh.

Suddenly we were at least 38% more interesting, and Rosa became eager to learn everything about us: how we met, where we've been, who we are. We considered giving false names, but it's always easiest to tell the most truths, so that we did. Rosa immediately loved us and invited us to her favorite bar down the road, so we joined her.

She described loving our accents, so I encouraged her, "Oh! Zen yoo must try an accent, no? Even eef it eez not real, zen ze ozer peeples will not know, yes?" Lora almost hurt herself trying not to laugh.

We spent a while behind the bar while Rosa finished her drink and met up with one of her friends. I do have reason to think that her friend suspected that I was not, in fact French, but he was also considerably less high than she was, and he played along, so on went the night. This friend either knew the people who owned the bar, or himself owned the joint so he got us in for free. We were immediately approached by an older (very, very, very altered) gentleman who apologized profusely about something, and insisted on buying us drinks. I managed to get away with just getting a water, but he was pretty desperate to use some money, so Lora got a vodka and orange, which she almost immediately left on a nearby table. This gentleman introduced himself as Michael, and spent about 10 minutes making me repeat his name over and over again, until I insisted, "No! No more! Eye cannot do zis all night! One more time, an zat is eet, yes? Or eye will change your name to somezing else...like Teem." The coincidence of my choice of the name Tim, given the future events was not lost on me.

Rosa invited us over to her previous friend's apartment, which was perhaps a little strange, but since they both seemed harmless enough, why not? Although, when we got there, there was some sultry jazz playing and the lights turned down, which immediately made me a little defensive. As it turns out, this friend is a musician who doesn't actually have many lights in his apartment. While there, Rosa got more stoned (which was an impressive feat, really), and we spent some time talking about her friend's business and life, which consisted of just closing down a newspaper he'd been publishing. He very kindly gave us copies of the last issue, and we asked him to sign it. When he asked what he should write I suggested, "Dear Lora et Victoria, I love yoo very much. 'Ugs and kisses, Pete." He went for the slightly less affectionate and slightly more polite route and wrote something to the extent of "Have a wonderful time in the U.S.," which was really quite nice

also. Soon, Rosa scribbled down her name, number and email for us and insisted that she very rarely gives it out to anybody, and so wanted us to hold onto it. I must say, I was sincerely flattered and felt a twinge of guilt, but after this evening, I made Lora take it home with her, since Lora really *is* foreign and that way it was just as Rosa wanted it. Plus, I highly doubt Lora would call her anyway, so Rosa wouldn't be getting any calls from people she didn't want. Soon we headed back over to the bar to dance like wild-women to some really strange, arhythmic music.

Lora and I found ourselves resting by the bar and Rosa wandered off, only to come back and bring us outside to meet some of her friends. As I looked at the group of people, the guy who had his back toward me looked remarkably like Steve Muffatti, at least from that back angle. There was a moment where I was thinking «Oh man...he's gonna call me out on it,» and then I wondered if I could give him a look so that he'd just roll with it. Rosa introduced us to him, which is when I realized that he was not, in fact, Steve Muffatti, even though he was remarkably attractive. He introduced himself as Tim (we go back to the irony where I was talking with that guy Michael and I decided to call him Tim instead) and I introduced Lora and myself and we entered into the conversation about where we're from. In a desperate attempt to never have a moment of silence, I began talking about how funny it was to be standing outside while at a bar. Tim began to talk about how he quite likes being outside and never quite felt comfortable in cities, wherein I explained how strange it was to live in a city for 6 months which eventually lead into a discussion about how we went to Chicken Rock and climbed/played on the waterfalls. Tim got really excited and mentioned how he loves that place, and that lead into talking about how he bikes a lot (and this is when I started crushing on him a bit beyond the 'oh heyyyy you're cute!'), so I described how I'm doing the bike tour next summer and we both geeked out pretty hard. I had to keep reminding myself to slow down and not understand random words or phrases though, which was a fun challenge. He also introduced us to his friend Ryan, a decidedly tall and skinny guy who at first seemed to me to be not really interested in what was going on but was in truth just really stoned, which got pretty funny later in the evening. So, we're talking about



traveling and how Tim wants to visit Ireland and Wales (well, Lora, Tim and I are talking... Ryan's sorta staring at the sky) and I get truly into super-femme French mode and start getting very close to him and insisted with big innocent eyes, «Oh! Well zen yoo must come an see me in Frahnce, no? Yoo come visit me an I will show you everzing!» At this point, he fortunately caught my innuendo and opened, then closed his mouth and nodded. It was round about this time I got curious as to how blatant my innuendo could get and get away with it by simply acting as though I wasn't aware of how provocative it sounded. It was also the same time I realized I could flirt outrageously and still be seen as charming, rather than slutty. So when Tim mentioned his Irish heritage and how he's got an Irish cross tattooed onto his deltoid, I of course asked to see it. He wrestled with his long sleeve and his collar before I insisted «Off with zee shirt! No more! Yoo take eet off and zen we will see, yes?» Most unfortunately, he managed to show us by stretching his collar instead.

Our conversation wandered everywhere, including to his occupation as a carpenter, which was a word French me didn't understand. It was remarkable how long it took for the group to actually explain it to me, and eventually it came down to «he makes furniture». «Wiz your mind?»

«What?»

«Yoo make zis furniture wiz your mind, yes?» Tim cracks up laughing, Lora rolls her eyes, vaguely smiles. «Uh, no, no, I use my hands.» I giggled to myself, and thought about leading this sentence elsewhere, but decided against it.

«Well, zen next time I come back to yoo, yoo will make sure yoo bring your superpowers and yoo will make me furniture wiz your mind, yes?» I turned to Ryan, who looked as though he was about to wander away. «And yoo too, yes? You will make ze zings wiz your mind for me?» Again, a vague smile, though he stayed.

Lora's shoes got the best of her, so we all sat down in the dark alleyway to continue our conversation. Tim asked about music, and I explain «Oh, American! Lots of ze rock music, yes? Ze rock classique? Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin, yes?» The way Tim's eyes lit up, I think it's worth now quantifying my crush. Upon seeing him, it was your standard physically attractive crush, which is a level 2 or so on Quine's Crush Scale. I haven't quite decided just how high up this scale goes yet, but you must build everything from the bottom up, so that's

how this scale works as well. So: level 2 upon first meeting. A combined factor of enjoying being outside/loving my favorite place to go swimming, raises the crush level to a 3.5. Being a biker nudges that up to a solid 4. Being a carpenter adds bonus points to the level 2 of the initial attraction score, with the potential to sky rocket when shirtless. Back to the conversation about music.

«Oh man, I grew up on that music. That was all my dad's favorites, so he'd play it all the time and I've just always loved it.»

«Oh yes! And zee Beatles, yes? I 'ave always loved zem, because of ze same wiz your fazer, my fazer loved zee Beatles. And lately I 'ave been listening to zem all ze time. And ze song zat I love ze most..wiz ze words 'I 'ave just seen a' -»

«Oh my god, yes! 'I've just seen a face I can't forget the time or place where we just met she's just the girl for me and I want all the world to see we've met'...» Now we go back to Quine's Crush Scale. This boy not only loves my new favorite song and has grabbed my hand in his excitement about it, but has also just burst out singing it in a pretty good voice. Level 4, we have now flown past 5 and are solidly pushing against the level 6.5. This takes into account his big dark eyes and the circumstances we find ourselves in.

We spend the next half our geeking out about Across the Universe, The Wall, and the symbols and representations of masculinity and femininity within them. And he's *not* a Hampshire student. *I know, right?* Why yes, random guy I met in a bar, let's just analyze these films here, kthnx.

In my passion, my English seriously improved. However, I caught myself at a convenient time when talking about how in Across the Universe, Jude mentions strawberries as juicy and sexy and they become linked with a very sexy female character, Sadie.

«Eet is very interesting, yes, 'ow zee strawberries are sexy and feminine, but bombs, zey are shaped like....» Here I shyly looked away and made a vague hand gesture in the air to show the shape I was describing, hoping someone would feed me the word 'phallic'.

«Like a penis?» Ahhh, Lora. Always there for me. Being the innocent, coy French girl I am (not) I looked at her with wide eyes, then at Tim, and blushed.

«Uhhhhh...yes...but...uh, I know zere is anozer word...I did not want to say zat one exactly, but yes..a..» blushblushblush «...peenies.» And the Oscar goes to... French Victoria! I'd like to thank the Academy and so on.

The boys laughed...I think the word 'penis' caught Ry-



an's attention and brought him back from the haze he'd been floating in all night, because he suddenly seemed abnormally interested in what I was saying. On went the conversation after some more chuckles and on went the very innocent reaching-for-the-other-person's-arm/hand-when-talking-excitedly. Eventually Ryan wandered away and another older gentleman came by to offer us a hit off his pipe. Lora and I declined, though Tim accepted. Older Gentleman took a hit, Tim reached out, and Older Gentleman hurriedly declared «Hey. It's puff puff pass, and I just got a puff.» Soon after the aforementioned pass, Older Gentleman wandered off as well and I think Ryan wandered back in time for me to ask him what kind of music he liked. Since you were wondering: hip hop and rap, which was confirmed by the posters in his room, but that comes later on in the story.

We all continue chatting for quite a while, and it was really charming because Tim kept getting so excited about having met us and he declared that he'd never been to another country or met anyone from another country. (Well...besides the high population of Brazilians, Mexicans, and Columbians in the area, presumably. I think what he really meant was that he'd never met tourists, or maybe Europeans, but either way, the sentiment was quite sweet.) He would every so often point out how incredibly crazy it was that he ran into us in the bar in his town that he goes to all the time. The fact that I live in the town next over was an irony that did not escape me, nor Lora.

I ended up mentioning that I'm working on a flying trapeze this summer and so showed him my new callouses. I had completely forgotten he was a carpenter, so when he held out his hand and said «Oh hey, me too!» and displayed the most EPIC, thickly calloused hands I've seen in a while I got completely sidetracked. That and the fact that I noticed his forearms rippled like rope under his skin...and this was in a pretty darkly lit area. That sound you just heard? That would be my crush flying securely into a very high level 7.

I quite enjoyed my conversation with them, with me occasionally trying my best to seriously complicate any small moment in a conversation by not understanding a word and then not quite understanding the explanation either until the whole conversation comes tumbling down around us and there's a few beats of awkward silence once understanding has been achieved. How-

ever, I discovered it was really fun to mangle and beat a sentence within an inch of its life so that it makes no sense whatsoever and then beam proudly at everyone while they stare at you and obviously run the sentence over in their head several times trying to find any hint of meaning in it. Then, you get to stand there, looking all pleased with yourself while everyone else looks vaguely pained. And then there's the moment right before everyone gives up when you just let your face crumble and say something like «Oh no...my uh, Eenglish is so very bad...yoo do not understand, no?» and then everyone tries twice as hard and it's really quite sweet of them.

I was quite fortunate in the fact that no one I met spoke French. As it turns out, Ryan's sister does, but he doesn't, so I managed to go about all this without a hitch. Tim had mentioned how much he wanted to learn another language, so I began teaching him the very first thing I learned in French class in sixth grade.

I put my hand on my chest and said «Je m'appelle Victoria. Qu'est-ce que tu t'appelle?» Tim gave me a blank look, as I had expected, and as I had done in French class in sixth grade.

Again, I repeated, «Je m'appelle Victoria.» I then reached out to him and gave him a significant look that was supposed to convey «Now you say it.» Judging by his slightly less blank look, I think he was getting the jist, so I repeated again.

«Je m'appelle Victoria.» I then put my hand on his arm, lowered my voice and said «Je m'appelle Tim.» I must say, this guy was quite a good sport and I broke it down for him a bit slower. «Je...»

Lora offered, «Like in meaSURE.» Ahhh, those linguistics classes are paying off, my friend. He actually got it pretty quickly, so then I turned to Ryan and said, as I'd said to Tim, «Je m'appelle Victoria. Qu'est-ce que tu t'appelle?» Blank look. «I 'ave said, 'My name ees Victoria. What ees your name?' Yoo say, 'Je m'appelle Ryan.'» He did his best, which was truly a valiant effort, and I applauded delightedly with Lora.

«Zat ees very good! Yoo are 'ard, no?» The truly alarmed looks on everyone's faces were just too much fun. «Yoo are 'ard? Eet ees 'ard? For me? Wiz speaking françias?» There's nothing like butchering a sentence to really bring conversation to a dead halt. Clearly they'd realized that what I said did not necessarily mean what I meant, and now they were just wrestling with what I meant.

«Zis ees your first time, no?» Again, slightly startled looks from both men and Lora, though Lora's expression quickly shifted to something more like *oh you slut*. «Yes? Zis ees your first time? Wiz me? Your first time, wiz me? Togezer?» It would have been a double entendre had the men caught the more innocent of the entendres. Cue the big innocent eyes. «Zis ees your first time wiz me...speaking françias?»

«Oh! Oh, yeah, yeah it is. Thank you for teaching us!»

«Ahh, boyz, eye will teach yoo everyzing, yes? Togezer eye will teach yoo everyzing yoo need to know. Yoo will come home wiz me, yes?» Here came the alarmed looks from Lora. «Yoo will come home wiz me to Frahnce? An eye will teach yoo?» I almost felt badly for the boys, because they were being so patient in spite of all the double meanings floating around, but it was just too much fun, and the night was not nearly that late.

I mean, I didn't think it was that late, but apparently the bar was closing and we were all leaving, and they invited us to Ryan's apartment. Now, looking back on it, when two males I've just met invite me and another female friend over to their apartment, there is a significant portion of my brain that goes «Uhhh, well, see now that's not a brilliant idea.» Apparently, and quite fortunately, that part of my brain had wandered off for the evening. Hopefully it found someone else and was put to good use. So I mention how I'm borrowing my American friend's car (which isn't too far from the truth...I'm friends with my parents) and could drive, though we could walk also. They opt for the driving. However, before leaving, Rosa has begged us to find her before we left so we could say goodbye. We go back into the club (and I notice Tim's just as attractive in the full light: yay!) and we looked all around the club but couldn't find her, so we'd just decided to give up as we walked out of the joint, but one of the people at the door said, «Oh, Rosa? She's across the street, getting chicken.» And so off we bound to go say goodbye to her.

As I flounced across the street hand in hand with Lora, there is a gasp of delight from Tim.

«Ohmygod, you're wearing Doc Marten's.» The boy was admiring my cherry red Doc's. If you'll recall, we were previously seriously scraping against the upper limits of a level 7 crush on the Quine Crush Scale. After this

statement, we have crashed through that sugar glass ceiling and are lounging temporarily in a level 8.5 crush with the expectation of continuing onward at any moment.

«Oh ouais! Bien sûr! When one wears a dress an ees looking very girl, eet ees very important to wear ze big boots, because eef a boy zat eye do not like ees getting too close, eye can...» Here I mime drop kicking someone. Both Tim and Lora start cracking up, and Ryan turns toward us in a startled way. I grin and nod with big questioning eyes, «Yees? Zis is right?» They agree that it is, indeed, appropriate.

Rosa was indeed in the chicken place with her friend and some other people so we said our goodbyes with a kiss on the cheek and hugs. It was at that moment that I remembered I was French, and had been completely neglecting the cheek-kiss hellos. I had to immediately rectify this, particularly because it would open up a mixed signal way of getting close.

I slipped a hand through Ryan's arm because he looked dangerously close to wandering right into traffic and said to both of the boys, «Eye am very confused. In Frahnce, when we say 'ello, we do ze kisses on ze cheek, yes? Some places do deux, uh, two kisses, ozers do zree, and zen zere are some zat do four, which ees in my opinion, just wasting time. But when eye come 'ere, zey say do not do ze cheek kisses because 'ere eet means somezing different. Eef, « and I suddenly turn very seriously toward Ryan, «eef eye am giving yoo ze one, two kisses on ze cheek, zey say eet means zat eye am *interested* in ze kisses, and maybe somezing more.» Ryan started to lean down to move his face much closer to mine. Evasive maneuver A commencing:

«So,» I continue while suddenly turning toward Tim and Lora, «eye am told zat ze 'ug ees better. Zis ees much different for me, because at 'ome, ze 'ug means zat eye am interested, yes? Ze kisses for me are ze 'ugs for you,» or so I'd been told by a group of teenagers I'd been spending time with in southern France a few years ago. «An eye like zis, because eye like ze 'ugging and cuddling, an feeling anozer person's heart against mine, yes? So zis ees also good for me! But eye am very confused, because just now, eye am giving Rosa ze 'ugs, and she kisses me on ze cheek. Eye do not know what zis means. Ees she liking me?» They assured me no, but that kissing on the cheek in the U.S. was a little complicated and really depended

on the situation. Ryan pointed out that it's more socially acceptable for girls to kiss one another on the cheek, but not between men. Even hugging, he mentioned, depends on the situation.

«Oh. Zen...should eye not 'ug you? Ees eet not good?» Admittedly, I was practically feeding him lines, but at least he picked up on them, pulled me closer and whispered, «Oh no, hugging is really good. Should definitely hug.»

«Excellent!» I declare as I break away from him and start skipping ahead to Lora. Because, after all, I am a good girl and I don't lead men on. Knowingly. Sorta. And it's really hard to put serious moves on someone who's skipping away in facepaint. So off we skip to the car, but first Lora and I wanted to show off our mad circus skillz in the form of juggling clubs conveniently stashed in the trunk of the car.

These clubs are in a small duffel bag, which always looks a little sketchy so as I unzipped it I turned toward the boys and said with a very casual, yet earnest expression, «Usually in 'ere are bodies, yes? Babies? Zat are dead? And we juggle zose, because zat ees what we do een Frahn-ce.» Oh don't mind that loud thud, that was just Tim and Ryan's jaws hitting the floor as they gaped at me. Somewhere between the expression of horror and surprise was welling up an enormous burst of laughter in 3, 2, 1, and *there it was*. Lora quietly snorted back a chuckle.

Now, it's worth mentioning that I am still quite a n00b at juggling clubs...I'm fine with balls, but hugely inconsistent with clubs. This was one of those days when I was really awful. So there we are, standing in an empty parking lot in sparkly dresses with these two guys watching us with expressions of equal parts confused, amused, and impressed while Lora juggles and I drop shit everywhere. (Point of interest: I've improved since then.) Lora'd been wanting to start passing with me, but she lives in Australia and is consequently backward and ridiculous and passes in 4's instead of 3's and also passes to the wrong hand, such that I'd have to juggle backward or something. This was our first time actually getting a chance to juggle together, so it was probably not the best time to have an audience, but hey. Half of circus is about screwing up in a way that no one notices. So at this point our attempt at passing clubs is looking more like an epic battle with flying weapons and insults, generously doused in laughter. I made fun of her for being backward, she made fun of me for being French. Everything was wonderful. Didn't improve our juggling even a little, unfortunately. It was a learning experience

though; I learned I really need to practice and that throwing insults at a good friend in broken English is apparently hilarious for both onlookers and the good friend. To be completely honest, I reckon Lora likes me better when I'm French. But she's really into taking the piss out of each other, so I guess I shouldn't have been surprised.

Anyway, so I'm just making a mess out of everything and am trying to explain that «Eye am very new at zis, yes? Usually eye only 'andle balls, but now, ze clubs also! My American friend teaches me! We are not very good as yoo can see and everyzing is terrible.» The boys were truly generous and insisted that they were really impressed, which I believe was honest. However, we were really quite terrible, so I had to redeem myself.

«But eye 'ave a plan! Okay, so: Lora an eye will juggle like zis, yes? And zen Ryan, yoo step een for me, yes an juggle wiz Lora, and zen Tim, yoo step een for Lora, so zat yoo two are juggling togezer, yes?» I cut off the sounds of protest before they could become words.

«An zen, Lora an eye will step back een, yes, so we are juggling togezer. Zen, yoo two will come to ze center of us an do 'andstands, on your 'ands, yes, an we will juggle over yoo, and yoo will do 'andstands like zis for just deux minutes, ouais?» «But...! But two minutes! I can't do a handstand for two seconds!»

«I don't even know how to juggle!»

«Is that even possible?»

«What? No, eye do not understand yoo, so we will just do zis, yes? Okay, GO!» I gave them one last significant look before trying to juggle with Lora again and dropping everything everywhere, including the pretense that I actually wanted them to perform that trick. Soon, I gave up as being completely hopeless and quickly pulled out my sock poi I have and showed off the very few tricks I know, which were certainly sufficient enough to impress. I explained to them that I am pretty bad at poi as well, but people who get good light them on fire.

«Ze zing about circus ees zat once yoo get good at a skill or a trick, you light it on fire! ZAT is what circus ees! First, ze poi. Zen, ze juggling clubs. An zen, ze 'ula 'oops, yes? And zen, you do acro and light ze people on fire!» This is, of course a joke. Don't light someone on fire and then try to do acro with them. Neither of you will appreciate it. I did, however, explain to them about fleshing (which you should also not try at home), which does



involve wiping lit fuel on the skin briefly before blowing it out. They were equal parts fascinated and horrified, which is just what we like.

So we get in the car and Tim notices a sticker on the car and exclaims, «Hey! Bethel!»

«Oh yes! Eet ees where my friend lives, no?»

«No way! That's where Rosa, you know Rosa, that's where she lives! And [someone else who apparently we met who I don't remember] lives there too!» Awesome. Well, I never see them around, so I probably don't have to worry about it, especially since I'm going back to PA the next day anyway.

«Zat ees so funny! Eye did not know zis! Ah. Well, eef you are giving me ze directions for where we are going, zen eye will need zen to be slow, yes? Because eye am still not as good at directions?» They agreed, and given how I think Ryan was on slow-motion anyway, I figured we wouldn't have a problem. As the drive went on (and I had to pretend like I had no idea where we were) Lora and I continued to make fun of one another. She'd made a particularly scathing remark about my being French, and I had to have a good comeback since I was supposed to be hugely but playfully offended.

«Lora, eye will push yoo out of ze car, run over yoo, zen put ze car in reverse so zat eye can run over you again, yes?» Apparently this statement with my accent gave Tim the worst case of the giggles and they were just entirely too cute, so I had to continue by borrowing an insult from my best friend in elementary school.

«And zen, Lora, eye will pull you back into ze car, cut open your stomach, pull out your...uhh...your...intestines, yes?»

«Jees, Victoria! This is getting a little violent, isn't it?» (I can't write Lora's accent. I'm sorry. I'm just absolutely terrible at it. Just imagine it though. Along the lines of British, but not.)

«No, wait, eye am not done!» Tim's fit of giggles was still going strong, but I wasn't gonna let it up, because the adorable factor had him sliding in safely to a level 9 crush. «Okay, so eye pull out your intestines, wrap zem around your uhh, your..uh, your neck? Yes? Neck? And zen eye 'ang you from ze ceiling like a, uhmmm, a disco ball!» Lora was sufficiently horrified, Tim was a mess of laughter, and I think Ryan had become distracted by his hands.

«Ohhh, Lora, eye am so sorry, but eet makes Teem giggle like a leetle girl, yes? And eye do not want 'im to stop!»

Somehow he managed to suppress his giggles enough to exclaim, «HEY! I do not giggle like a little girl!» Now, I'm not entirely heartless, and when one is flirting, one shouldn't emasculate one's object of affection, so I assured him, «Oh, eye am sorry, eye must not 'ave ze right words!» Bam, easiest forgiveness ever.

Concise recap of what happened next: -Ryan got touchy (but since he was stoned and consequently slow-moving it was harmless and it was easy enough to stand up and pace as I was making a point if he drifted even a little past the knee.) -Smallest. Apartment. Ever. I noticed he had the Salvador Dali poster of the dripping clocks and so I said «Oh! Are yoo liking ze art?» And he kinda went on this really wandering train of thought about how he loves art. It's worth noting the only other pieces of 'art' were beer posters and half-naked women. -As the night progressed, I committed to the act and just started butchering my English worse and worse and worse until I was speaking pretty fluent Franglais with about 25% English and 50% French. (The remaining 25% were garbled words with a French accent that just sounded French except that I'd forgotten a lot of my vocabulary.) They got points for trying to understand me anyway. Lora was spot on though, even if I had just said something almost entirely in French, she would somehow know what I meant even though she speaks not a word of the language.

Then of course, 5 am rolls around and we're like «Alllll-righty, it's time to go home» and they invited us to stay (declined, naturally) but did walk us back out to our car like gentlemen. After another half hour or so we FINALLY leave and as we pull away Lora and I start cracking up and I just instantly dropped the accent. We'd been driving for about 8 minutes or so and I was talking as much as I could without the accent since I'd been doing it for so long and I was like «Ohman, so, you got everything? Keys, cards and all?» And that's when she realized that she didn't have her wallet. So we drive back and I had to go back into the accent and we had that awkward «Allo! We are forgetting somezing!» and then had to hunt in the apartment for it. Fortunately we found it pretty fast even though it was wicked awkward.

And that was that! All in all a ridiculous night. But loads of fun. Hope you're having fun being home! Hugs, Victoria



## Excerpts from the Quotebook by David Axel Kurtz

We have conquered the waves, we have conquered the rocks, and chances are if you're reading this you *are* the Romans. Nothing lies beyond; the world is yours. Life is fraternal, opulent, sweet, luxurious, and long. Now you must make something of it. *Vea Victoris*, indeed.

What thou lovest well shall assuredly be reft from thee. Or thou ain't trying hard enough.

If someone gives you a blank piece of paper and a sharpened pencil, you are more spoiled than ninety nine percent of the people who have ever lived. Add an eraser and you should just cry from the shame of your advantage.

There is a time when one can no moar lurk.

If a school does not offer an environment which is physically safe, it is a failure. If it does offer an environment which is intellectually safe, it fails even further. A school is a place where physical safety is to be guaranteed, thus that intellectual safety might be challenged, in every student, *as much as is possible*. A school which forgets this is not a school; it is a summer camp.

Surprise is an advantage not easily recovered.

"Why are we here?" - why this preoccupation with the question? We among all the beasts of the world are blessed by knowing that *we are here*. That ought to be answer enough for anyone; to ask any more is just lazy.

Beauty, stuck in the eye of the beholder, is often little different from a cataract.

A person who can express a thousand old thoughts in a new language has not come so far as a person who can

express one new thought in an old language.

If everyone in the world spoke an invented language, within a generation it would fragment and diversify until the lexicographic map of the planet is substantively unchanged from what it is today. When the world is finally unified enough to preserve such a language in all its universal functionality – then such a language will no longer be needed.

Stick to your guns. Those who draw down upon you will respect you at least for that.

People today believe that, even if they themselves do not understand the complexities of the world, then at least there is someone on this world who does, and they themselves could learn it if only they took the time and trouble. This attitude, more than any particular knowledge, is what separates modern man from his unenlightened ancestors. Remove this one certitude, and then you can understand why we are only a few centuries removed from alchemy and dragons.

Fantasy: the belief that Durer's rhinoceros is superior to God's.

Do unto others as they desire to be done unto. The Golden Rule is presumptuous at best – at worst, a quick and easy way to wake up on the wrong side of the sackcloth.

If you aren't comfortable telling someone that they are full of shit, and hearing the same from them, then yours is not a healthy relationship.

It is the rarest sort of person who can value something without having to pay for it.

Regarding third world underdevelopment - if you knew that the society next door was sending rockets to the moon, how hard would you work to try to invent the lightbulb? The gap between us is so great that it is foolish for us to ask that they try to bridge it themselves, working from the ground up just as we did. The best we can try to do is incorporate them into our society, so that, slowly and slowly, more of them are brought up to the cutting edge with us. This is called "globalization".

The Palestinians have no more right to Israel than the Israelis have to Israel. That is to say: none but what they can secure for themselves. At the moment the Israelis have right on their side, truth growing from the barrel of an Uzi. This may change, through military or diplomatic action. But I wouldn't bet on it.

Anger at another person is simply frustration at your inability to properly articulate your opposition. Don't get mad. Get rhetoric.

Pleasing others is an excellent surrogate for pleasing yourself. But morphine's probably safer.

Love is a paltry excuse for a relationship. It is the epoxy which seals together any two human objects, however poorly they might fit together. Thus it should only be applied at the last stage of assembly.

The Romans sought to make a desert and call it peace. To them it was peace; to everyone else it was Rome.

Humanity was once consumed by the need to remain above the animals. Now we seem to be consumed by the need to remain below machines. The myths of ancient lands, of monsters and magic, are utterly beyond true comprehension to one who fears order, rather than chaos. The minotaur scares nobody in the day of the monitor and the mouse.

Real beauty starts on the inside... but invariably it comes to the surface.

All groups tend towards the esoteric. If you wish to participate in such a group, study it first, and strip away

the layers of useless ritual they have built for themselves. If anything at all remains, join that group immediately – they are among the first in human history to have such substance.

Nation: a corporation selling a variety of products: safety, security, entertainment. It earns low margins but has the highest of gross incomes. It will continue to succeed, until someone else provides better service for less.

Wit is not itself a work of art – it is simply a way to keep the engines burning between artworks created. Those who praise wit for its own sake would not know true Art if it came and aphorism'd in their face.

Art must be fueled by passion. Passion is born of being unrequited; it is the child of Cupidius Solus, god of the empty bed. As soon as one is happy in life, the bed is filled, the child dies, and I hope to God you never get published again.

The best way to make fun of someone is to tell them exactly what they want to hear.

In this world around us, we have all the tools needed to achieve immortality, omnipotence, omnibenevolence – in short, to construct our own happiness. Everything we need is right here. It is our failure if we have not yet achieved this. It isn't easy. Nobody said it would be. It's been the hard work of many for thousands of years and we're just starting to get a good rhythm going. We're getting closer. One day, it will happen. Knowing this, how can anyone say but that we live in Heaven?

"Look mom, no hands!" - well then, time to try something harder. Life is too short for unnecessary handicaps – and too full of necessary ones already.

FUCK THE CROWN OF LAURELS

If you can have access to it, you do not need to own it. If you can get a perfectly good reproduction of it, you do not need the original. In the world of libraries, interstates, and the internet, to be a monk is no sacrifice at all.



You are what you post.

A protest accomplishes something when it accrues a majority of the populace – whence it is known as a ‘vote’.

Democracy causes the government to reflect its constituents. If you have trouble with the ways things work, it is not the fault of the system, but of the systematized. Take it up with them.

Ask what your country can do for you. If you do not, your country shall become weak, decadent, unchecked in its power – and the only people who will benefit from it will be those of morality dubious enough to have so asked. Make your country work for everything it takes from you. It is your moral duty.

Fair Trade will be accomplished when all sides bargain from an equal footing. To voluntarily sacrifice a superior position is not fair to either party.

A starving artist has challenges. A well-fed artist has the leisure to chase better challenges than starvation. If he does not take advantage of this opportunity, he is boring. Likely his art shall be so too.

Any person with ears can criticize music, with eyes, movies, with half a brain, a book. They are the target audience for these things, they certainly have a right to pass judgment, regardless of whether or not they could “do any better” themselves. But unless they are planning on trying their own hands at such things – why bother with criticism? Learning from the mistakes of others is of little benefit unless one then goes and puts that learning to use.

If you wouldn't want to live it, why would you want to read a story about it?

Even if there had once been dragons, pixies, unicorns – what of it? Today dragons would live on reservations, unicorns would be in zoos with all the other animals you don't care about, and the pixies would be riding high on affirmative action while bemoaning the erosion of their racial identity.

A degree in art history will help you spend the money you won't know how to make. A degree in economics will help you make the money you won't know how to spend.

Savor your competition, and those who make you feel inadequate! An artist can get just as much mileage from a muse who pushes from below as one who pulls from above.

Drugs reduce a person's abilities. This is desired by many, especially those who are still in school. And why not? Their academics do not require of them their best efforts, nor very much of their time, and rarely are any good outlets for their abilities easily provided to them. They are like ships that are still under construction yet whose boilers are already lit – or worse, seaworthy, yet still kept on land. Thus they inevitably strain at their moorings. This strain is painful in every way. Do not then be surprised if they try to dampen the head of steam that they have raised, by throwing a bushel or two of marijuana into the furnace.

“Charlemagne was illiterate” - disdain Charlemagne, or disdain literacy, as you will.

Life is Oh Exploitable.

If it – or she – would make a heaven of hell for you, then shun her thoroughly, until heaven you have made, alone.

A man with a limp in his childhood, in his maturity will desire to run. With a gangly or portly body, will then wish to be seen. With a lisp, will wish to be heard. With love, will wish to love. Without it, will wish to have it, very much.

Do you *want* a politician who is honest?

In any argument, each party will eventually employ the most extreme examples to support their position (or to attack that of their opponent). Godwin's Law deals with Naziism and the Holocaust, widely regarded as the most extreme manifestation of many and various abstract ideals. But this is just one manifestation of the natural

progression of a *par exemplum* argument; it is nothing but *reductio ad absurdum* with a cowlick and a little mustache.

Be glad the world is not perfect, everything quickly possible, everything easily achievable; then you would really have to sit down and think about what you want.

The development of a “sixth sense about something” is simply an abdication of responsibility towards the other five.

Poverty is the greatest surrogate for having higher goals in life. It makes doing boorish work a necessity; it makes the majority of one’s actions in life necessary, in a way impossible to find otherwise as a young-and-healthy resident of this fair bourgeois utopia; it allows one’s goals to be imposed from outside, without need of imposition from within, and all the hard meditation that requires. Perhaps the reason that more English/Philosophy majors end up working in coffee shops is not their unfitness for other employ, but rather that this gives their lives challenge without requiring that they make any subjective value judgments, thus to pursue higher challenges. Perhaps they have simply seen the dubious quality of surrogate activities, and thus choose, even subconsciously, to put themselves in situations whereby they lack the disposable time and resources to pursue such things. Well, maybe not – but that sure would explain Questionable Content.

Sons no longer return to the field of battle to claim the bodies of their fallen fathers. Perhaps this is progress. I don’t know.

You can learn a great deal from tilting at windmills. This is the theory of modern education. Though it seems a waste, when there are so many true monsters in the world against which one could just as easily throw oneself.

A competent, educated, intelligent, motivated person can adapt to any situation in which they find themselves. It is, in fact, only the very rare amongst them who can find themselves in a situation and not so master it, molding themselves to fit it, making themselves in time its king or queen. Therefore such a person should be very, very careful what sort of situations they allow themselves to

enter, for in so doing they will shape themselves, and their lives. (This is called “Charlotte Simmons’ Syndrome”.)

I have more respect for an agoraphobe getting the paper than a Mozart writing a symphony.

Today’s proletariat was yesterday’s aristocracy.

Most people spend their entire young lives trying to secure for themselves a place of privacy and safety: a white picket fence, a steady job, doors to lock upon themselves, rooms to call their own. As soon as these things are secured, they spend the rest of their lives trying to escape solitude, and find challenge for their lives: risky mortgages, new careers, dinner parties, birthday-present bungee-jumping, a rousing game of Musical Spouses, &c. Perhaps this is the true triumph of modern society, that people can do this to their heart’s content. But I am as yet unconvinced that a noble heart should be contended with so little.

One man’s leitmotif is another man’s leetspeak.

OMNIA TERRA IN PARTAM UNAM DIVISA  
EST, PARTAM SOLAM INCOLUNT HUMANA.

There are far fewer things on Earth, Horatio, than you have yet dreamt of. And as you keep dreaming, so shall Earth remain, undiscovered.



# SECTION **LIES**

## Hampbabwe

by Sarah Mullens, Ian McEwen, and Ella Wind

lands.

You've studied third world countries in your Social Justice for Social Change class, but little did you know that your findings would hit so close to home. In fact, did you know that Hampshire College IS third-world college?

This is absurd, you say. Hampshire College hasn't been colonized and then left to fend for itself by richer, more developed institutions.

Hampshire doesn't have to send away all its best and brightest to complete their studies in richer institutions that offer more resources, especially for science and engineering students.

Hampshire doesn't have several small groups receiving inordinate amounts of funding to help the state of the institution that consistently skim off the top and are riddled through and through with corruption.

The President of Hampshire College doesn't reside in a mansion while its citizens live in poorly insulated, temporary housing... with mold.

Hampshire doesn't have a glut of rich, white, young Americans looking to "broaden their cultural horizons," and disillusion themselves that they are changing the world.

Hampshire students don't have a puppet government elected by no one which fails at any attempt to do any actual governing, and instead is filled with power-hungry pariahs looking to keep their high posts, unburdened by checks and balances.

Hampshire College's President doesn't answer directly to a small elite of rich powerful individuals from far, far away.

Hampshire College citizens aren't seemingly unaware of the well-proven long-term risks of heavy tobacco smoking.

It is not the case that the richest students on campus are those who smuggle in illicit substances from foreign

Hampshire College isn't severely factionalized along arbitrary geographic and historical lines.

After spending an average span at Hampshire, it isn't the case that only nearly half of your comrades will have survived.

Hampshire's admittance requirements don't resemble those of a third-world country; it has nothing to do with how much money you have and so much to do with one's actual qualifications and ability.

Hampshire doesn't have a constant rotation of insurgent movements looking to overthrow the government and the established social order.

Hampshire's citizens don't subsist on second hand, badly fitted clothing.

Hampshire doesn't have poor, underfunded and prohibitively distant medical care, and horribly handicapped-inaccessible housing areas.

Communication at Hampshire isn't limited to the lowest common denominator of those who can shout the loudest and paint the most walls with their slogans.

Hampshire doesn't have an unresponsive dictator who refuses to step down after public outcry upon discovering his embezzling of government funds.

Hampshire doesn't have blocky, post-Soviet architecture.

Hampshire isn't ruled over by a much maligned, multi-institutional police force.

Hampshire isn't so lacking in housing resources that citizens are forced to reside as refugees at neighboring institutions.

AND Hampshire certainly doesn't suffer from unprofessional, ineffective journalism. We do not have just one, but two, poorly edited, uninformative publications (whether or not they claim to have journalistic integrity). 🤖



## The Price of a Heart

by Kiyara Leis

Arthur nodded cordially at the other men in line, as he took his usual spot by the oak tree. There was an unspoken agreement that, when the men went home for the evening, their spots would be kept waiting for them when, the next morning, yawning and stretching in sunrise's first light, they stumbled back to Caroline's house. They were civilized gentlemen after all.

"Top of the morning to you, Art." Geoffrey would, of course, be happy. He was next.

"Geoffrey." Arthur couldn't help the coldness of his nod; he still hours to wait.

There wasn't time to engage in conversation anyway. The front door of the mansion was swinging open and Bertha, the French maid, stomped out, nose in the air, to announce,

"First!" Her accent had always sounded more Cockney then French to Arthur, but who was he to correct Caroline? Besides, it wasn't like he had ever been to France.

Arthur settled by the tree and, taking long sips from his thermos of coffee, watched the house. Geoffrey wasn't in for long. When he came out, the jaunt was no longer in his step and he didn't pause to greet anybody as he hurried by, head down. Alexander was next and his meeting was even shorter and, if the sour expression was anything to go by, didn't go any better. He was followed by Andrew, who was in the house for a full half hour. The men were sitting down to lunch by the time he emerged, smiling jubilantly as they glared back. Andrew was followed by the twins, Daniel and Max, who were in and out in quick succession; looking as miserable as they did every year when their prized sows failed to sweep any prizes at the Country Fair. Benjamin was in for longer but wasn't smiling when he came out. And then it was Arthur's turn.

"Follow. No touching." Bertha snapped, as she led him through a twisting maze of corridors. Arthur didn't need to be told. He was sure that the icy white of the marble would hold each of his fingerprints captive, waiting to laugh at him for thinking he had some right to this house and its' mistress. Each room they walked through seemed bigger than the last and full of such ornate furni-

ture that Arthur worried that he wouldn't know the couch from the coffee table.

Bertha stopped him with an iron grip to his arm and pointed at an open doorway, "Go." When Arthur, distracted by his fear of fancy couches, looked at her blankly, she gave him a hard push between his shoulder blades, sending him stumbling in. Trying to catch his balance, he made to grab the wall but instead got hold of a bookshelf, shaking several books loose and onto the floor. Gentle laughter filled the room and, flushing, he looked into Caroline's sparkling eyes.

"Leave it alone." She waved a delicate hand at the pile of fallen books, "Come, sit."

Arthur, feeling like his legs were about to shake right off him, took a couple of steps closer to where she was reclining on a couch. He had never been this close to her before. He had never even been in the same room as her before.

"Hi." She smiled at him, pointing to the chair directly across from her. Unsure that his mouth would work, he held up a hand in greeting and sat, folding his hands together with such harshness that his knuckles turned white.

The silence stretched out between them for a few, long seconds before Caroline, smiling kindly, asked, "What's your name?"

"Arthur." Some more silence. After a couple more seconds, Caroline tried again.

"So Arthur, what can I do for you?"

"Well...um, you see. Um – well." He fell silent again as Caroline giggled.

"It's not the most eloquent proposal, I've received but I like it." Arthur couldn't even force his lips into a smile. That was the result of the hours of practice in front of the mirror? What had happened to the poetry he had memorized? The gifts of words he had planned on giving her? He was a failure.

"Here's the thing, Arthur." Caroline leaned back against the couch, hands folding in a business-like manner. "My father has told me I have no choice to marry. However, the choice of husband is up to me. As you might

have noticed, I have had a few offers.” Three straight days of offers. “I’m sure you understand that I want to make the best choice possible. Therefore I have set up a test of sorts.” Arthur inwardly groaned. How was he supposed to pass some test when he had dropped out of school in the eighth grade? No wonder Andrew had looked so pleased; he had always been a brain. “I have given everybody a task. Whoever completes it first, successfully, wins my hand.” Caroline’s voice lowered conspiratorially, “I want you to bring me back the sunrise in a teacup.”

“Excuse me?” Arthur was sure he had misheard. But Caroline was already turned away, indicating the waiting Bertha that she should take him away.

Arthur paced the small confines of his cottage, pausing only to slump on his little cot, head in hands, before beginning to pace again. Was this some sort of joke? Was Caroline just trying to make a fool out of him? Obviously, there was no way to capture the sunrise. It had to be a joke. Unless maybe there was some way and she assumed that he would know about it because she really wanted to marry him? It had to be a joke. But maybe it wasn’t? Clearly the only solution was to go the next day and ask Brother John, Wise Man of the Mountain.

Having made his decision, Arthur awoke early the next day, milked the cows, packed some lunch and left. It would take all day to reach Brother John’s hut on top of Mount Verde and, even if he made it in perfect time, it was more than he could spare. But then again, it was Caroline. For her, he would let all his cows die of swollen udders.

The incline of the mountain was wet with morning dew and Arthur had to dig his fingers into rocky ledges to hoist himself higher. By the time the sun was high in the sky, Arthur was dripping sweat. Reaching for the next outcropping, Arthur’s hand slipped and he went tumbling backwards, rolling down the hill until he came to a stop, with a sickening crunch of his arm, in a clearing. For hours, he lay there, moaning, wondering if he was going to die. What an inglorious death, to starve or be eaten by some animal just because he couldn’t move his arm! He refused.

Driven by his determination to live, and his parched throat, Arthur forced himself to, painfully, half rise and look around. By some stroke of the luck that had otherwise eluded him, he had been thrown only a few feet

from a small, bubbling lake. Taking a deep breath, he rose, curved with pain, and hobbled to the water, falling on his stomach to take long, deep sips of the cool water.

When he felt half-way like himself again, he was able to cut some of the reeds growing along the bank and turn them into a make-shift cast for his arm. By the time he was done, the sun was starting to set and Arthur, thirsty again, lowered his mouth back to the water.

He was arrested by the sight of himself in the ripples. He was a mess. His battered, shattered visage was made all the more painful by the gorgeous colors spread on the canvas of the sky above him. Sunset. Arthur looked up at the sky, down at the water, and back to the sky.

The sunset was in the water. He had figured it out. He knew how to win Caroline.

Arthur reached into his pack, withdrew the teacup which, although cracked by his fall was still usable, and filled it with the lake’s water. He tilted the cup so that it caught the reflection of the sky and smiled. He had won.

The walk down the mountain was long and arduous, but Arthur knew it would be worth it to appear at Caroline’s house at sunrise and show her his gift. His marriage gift. Reaching their village, tired and sweaty, he had just enough time to wash and change his clothes and then begin making his way to Caroline’s house. Unfortunately, he was not the first to arrive.

Studding the lawn were dozens of Arthur’s fellow suitors; all of them looking tired but satisfied. Geoffrey had a large piece of mirror held carefully in his hands. Alexander had some wrapped up package that looked like it was dripping blood. Andrew had a handful of diamonds. And Daniel and Max each had half a peacock slung over their shoulders.

Arthur looked around and then looked down at his own small offering. He hadn’t won. He turned around, trudged home and ended up marrying a farm girl. It was many years before he came to realize that a marriage wasn’t much of a marriage when it was with a girl who thought love could be measured in a stranger’s completion of an impossible task.

But he never drank out of a teacup again.



## **Lessons of love:** Narrative evaluations for past relationships by Victoria Quine

Student's performance was marked mostly by apathy. Student presented unexceptional work with limited attention and had only occasional attendance. A playground fight of honor proved to be the only demonstration of effort in the subject. It was sloppily thought out, but effectively executed. This was the one piece of work that was admirable, especially for a first grader, but it does not redeem a year's worth of inattention. Student could use remedial work at both the quantitative resource center and the writing center.

Student possessed an admirable quality of commitment to the subject by actively engaging with it for over 4 years, though the quality of work waned as the course finished. The student initially shyly approached the subject, but soon engaged with intention and interest above and beyond the requirements of the class. The student often submitted extra credit work and showed a particular interest in the musical applications of the subject, which he demonstrated through multiple songs. Student does need to improve on focus. A few years into the subject, he became extensively engaged with another class. Though this didn't immediately subtract from his progress in this course, it did have negative long-term effects. Technically the student shouldn't even be getting an evaluation since he dropped the class suddenly, but given the amount of work put in earlier, perhaps this could at least count as an advanced learning activity. Though he took this course many years ago, the student is still showing an interest in re-taking the course. The professor strongly advises against this as the student's academic record has been reflecting his inability to engage in just one class and he is nearly swamped with extracurriculars.

This student was enthusiastic and energetic in every endeavour, though lacked a certain amount of academic sophistication. When the student was present, he brought a fresh perspective to the discussion, and the class benefited greatly from his contributions. However, the student's presence in class was limited to only the add/drop period.

After this time, the student spoke with the professor and expressed his interest in continuing the course. In spite of this, after a series of absences, the professor became concerned. The professor checked his class list to find that the student had instead chosen to re-take an earlier course and neglected to follow through with the administration's procedure of dropping this course. Professor advises the student to make himself familiar with the bureaucratic process since few other professors will be as generous to drop him from the course with a 'withdraw', rather than simply not giving an eval.

Student initially took this class as an elective, but eventually decided to take the full course. Student's attendance was often perfect, though he would be absent for days on end before returning. Though the student's performance is admirable and he is clearly a very good student, he could use work on deciding whether or not he wants to take a class. The student dropped and added the course many times, even when it involved staying on a waitlist. Though the student can be very challenging, his academic successes are hugely rewarding and the professor has repeatedly offered to be his Div II or III chair since a good guiding hand could make a work of difference in his quality of work. Student is more than welcome to come into office hours and discuss academic topics with the professor, regardless of whether or not he chooses to take another course. However, the professor would appreciate it if the student would attend scheduled meetings. Or return emails. Goddammit.

This student should probably just stop wasting \$53,000 of his parents' money a year and instead drop out and go get that job flipping burgers since he'll never amount to anything.

This student participated actively in the course and produced high quality work. He had excellent attendance through the course and demonstrated his writing strengths through a series of extra-credit pieces. Student



# Rules of Hampshire

## by David Axel Kurtz

has a lot of potential and though the professor would be delighted to have him in another class, it appears that the student is pursuing a different variation of courses. The professor will certainly write any letters of recommendation that might be needed.

This student's participation in class was the strongest during field-trips where he engaged with the material with an enthusiasm that was contagious. He also demonstrates an unusual learning style, but clearly knows how to engage other un-traditional learners. However, at the end of the add/drop period, the student chose to drop the course.

Student performed exceptionally well in the online prerequisite of this course, and came to the classroom delighted and excited to learn. He worked very hard at the material, though didn't bring anything new to the class discussions. Instead, he often reiterated or expressed his agreement with earlier theses. This subject had long been an interest of his and the student declared his major in the subject. However, after returning to online courses, the student's work quality significantly dropped and failed to meet the professor's expectations. The professor advised the student audit the course, but at the student's stubborn insistence in (inadequately) pursuing his major, the professor dropped him from the class. Professor advises that the student take many different classes before declaring his major next time.

This student attended every office hour offered. Though it was nice to see academic enthusiasm and rigor, the professor pointed out that if the student kept attending every single office hour, there wouldn't be office hours for other students. This student clearly misunderstood and thought the office hours were an intensive course. Even after the professor and student clarified the problem and checked in with Central Records, the student still insisted on coming to every single office hour. This student's intense and prolific academic work would be strengthened significantly by pursuing one or several independent studies.



### RULES OF THE HAMPSHIRE

(yes, yes, adapted from [http://encyclopediadramatica.com/Rules\\_Of\\_The\\_Internet](http://encyclopediadramatica.com/Rules_Of_The_Internet) )

1. The first rule of Hampshire is you will only talk about Hampshire
2. The second rule of Hampshire is you will ONLY talk about Hampshire
3. We are Hampsters
4. Hampsters are Legion
5. Hampsters are Hampsters until they graduate ,Äi at least
6. Hampsters can be vapid, stupid, immature, unmotivated, spoiled children
7. Hampsters are still smarter than 99% of other college students
8. There are no real rules at Hampshire
9. Anything can get you punished at Hampshire
10. If you take classes at any other colleges ,Äi DON,ÄdT
11. All your carefully picked political and ethical positions can easily be ignored
12. Anything you say will be printed verbatim in The Omen
13. Anything you say will be printed misquoted in The Climax
14. Argue with trolls ,Äi tilting at windmills is the only way to learn
15. The harder you try, the bigger a burnout you will become
16. The bigger a burnout you are, the more legendary a Hampter you will be
17. Everyone graduates eventually
18. All opinions are fascist, imperialist, reactionary, dogmatic, and Republican
19. The more you study it, the stronger it shall become
20. Everything is to be done ironically

## Everybody Stand Back by Ian McEwen

21. Every Div III today is a Div II from yesterday
22. Every Div II today will be a Div III tomorrow
23. Every Div III today will be a master,Äôs thesis in two years
24. Every Div I will be ignored the moment it is finished
25. The more classes you take, the less they will relate to your concentration
26. Every concentration becomes interdisciplinary - eventually
27. Everyone is gay.
28. Everyone is transgendered.
29. Everyone is a person of color.
30. Everyone is secretly a Caucasian Christian Hetero who drinks Starbucks.
31. TITS and GTFO ,Äì especially if there,Äôs a tour nearby
32. Evals or it didn,Äôt happen
33. Div IV ,Äì it,Äôs never enough
34. If you can think of it, someone in Merrill is watching porn of it. No exceptions.
35. Someone in Dakin is watching the person in Merrill through a telescope
36. Once studied, it can never be unstudied
37. You cannot divide by zero (just look at Kelly!)
38. If Central Records says it, CASA will contradict it, and vice versa
39. Social Justice is cruise control for cool
40. Lemelson is cruise control driving towards employability
41. It needs moar social change. No exceptions.
42. Everything is Sacred
43. The more hideous and ugly a thing is, the more transgressive it is to study it
44. Even one positive comment about anything makes you fail at hipsterism
45. One must read XKCD by no later than 12:01 AM, MWF
46. There is always a way to reference Firefly in every conversation
47. The sauna is always closed 🧘

/^tMy fellow (beings|students|comrades) who have (been freed from|escaped|avoided|bribed selves out of) (oppressive|evil|bad|cruel) things such as (grades|pronouns|showers|classes|intelligence|David Axel Kurtz)[,:;] (I|we) write you (today|this week) to (inform you of|hint at you about) a (grave injustice|great evil|real pisser|pudgy bastard) that is occurring in (our|the collective's|Freddy's) (very own)? (campus|bubble|circle|jerk|orbit around Kurtz). Our (president|leader|fabulous friend), (Ralph Hexter|Ananda Valenzuela|Sam Light|Pam Tinto), (recently|one time|never) went against (Hampshire's|our|Mod (1|71)'s) very (founding principles|vague birthtime suggestions|hilarious presuppositions) when (he|she|it|they|she|he|hy|xel[^ ]+)(suggested change|tried to make the college some money|bought something from Wal-Mart|dated a first year). This (ridiculous|persnickety|problematic) and (insensitive|obnoxious|criminal|laudable) act, if left (unopposed|unwritten-about|unmocked), (could|might|will) turn our (school|general vicinity) into (exactly what it was meant not to be|a hotbed of devilry|UMass|Amherst|Smith|Holyoke|Xanadu). For further (proof|suggestion|implication) of this, (I|we) (invite|implore|suggest) you to (e-mail me|attend my discourse|read (Plato|Marx|Neal Stephenson)).\n\tYes, (my|our) (friends|equals|holders of moral high ground|people|people-people), we have the opportunity to make Hampshire history by standing up for what is (right|noble|(trendy|ill-fitting|smelling of tobacco smoke)|wrong). Only by making our (voices|posters|Hampedia pages) heard and letting (those in charge|our ceilings|the Omen) know that we will not (stand|sit|louge) for such (travesties|antics|heinous fuckery|heinous fucking of first years) will we create (justice|social change|a more peaceful living environment for woodland creatures). Only by (speaking out|putting up poorly written flyers|buggering around (Northampton|Amherst|Cuba)) can we make

## Law School Application Essay by David Axel Kurtz

sure (the truth|something resembling the truth|totally false, but amusing, shit) is known. (Il|we) encourage all of you to not (sit idly|study|do worthwhile things) and accept everything (the administration|(Il|we)|the Climax) (says|implies|avoids), but instead to (do your research|question authority|accept everything (Il|we) say|read Wikipedia and call it a day). As a wise (fucker|regular expression) once said, it is only with (truth and unity|mostly-plaigiarized and recycled Omen articles) that we can achieve (Nirvana|Pearl Jam|Soundgarden|lack of boredom on Friday nights).\$/

... I actually get the jokes XKCD makes. 

(PRIMA: You'll never get into law school! You're in the fucking circus!

DAK: Oh yeah?

SECUNDA: Law school is such a waste of time. If you spend more than fifteen minutes applying for it, you have sold your soul.

DAK: Setting timer for fifteen minutes...)

I've tried to take advantage of my time at college. I've worked hard to make myself an active part of the Hampshire community. I've joined many student organizations, from academic advocacy groups to campus publications to the college blacksmith's guild. I've been treasurer of this and editor of that and everything from copy-boy to committee chair. For a year and a half I ran the Hampshire College Cheese Club. Believe me, it's not a bad job if you can get it.

Often there were things I wanted to do that nobody else was doing. Then I would go and learn enough that I could start a group myself. In my four years at Hampshire I started near as many groups as I joined. Some of them died out after a semester. Some of them will still be going strong long after I graduate.

As a writer, it was easy for me to justify my involvement in all these myriad activities. It has given me myriad wonders to write about. But a writer, and indeed simply as a student, I think one ought to take full advantage of the opportunities afforded by an undergraduate experience. Howard Roark said that he would see things in the world he didn't like, and then work to change them. I have tried as much as possible to let the things of the world change me.

One of the activities which I joined was the Hampshire College Circus. I started without any circus skills to speak of. I began by working with juggling balls. I progressed to staff-spinning, to tumbling, to clowning and mime. In my time remaining at college I look forward to working on stilts, to spinning poi, perhaps even flying on the trapeze. Not bad for a nerdy kid from Maine, I like to think.

I have also fallen in with a group of the more committed members of the circus. They are planning on taking some time off after college to work as a professional troupe. I am nowhere near trained nor talented enough to join them, even if I wished to. Yet it has been my pleasure to assist them as a grantwriter, an area to which my skills are somewhat better suited.

I tend to fall in with the core members of any group I join. I have often been called an intense young man; I admire commitment, and I respect people who go at a given subject, any subject, with thoroughness and intelligence and all their full attentions. I cannot stand to be idle. So I prefer to be around people who feel likewise.

One day at Circus I was spinning staff alongside our most accomplished staff-spinner. She kept going through the same routine over and over again. To me it looked perfect; she is graceful, her movements elegant, her work just beautiful to watch. So I asked her, "Why are you doing the same routine a hundred times?,"

She replied, "To make sure I get it right every time.,"

"But you get it right ninety-nine times out of a hundred!," I said. "Isn't that good enough?,"

"I'm practicing for firestaff," she answered, talking to me and catching a ten-foot rotor toss without trouble. "Even in practice, you've gotta pretend the staff's on fire. You're performing in front of hundreds of people. And the fire's burning hot enough to send you to the hospital. Then that hundredth time, when you mess up, it gets pretty important.,"

I realized, then, that what she described is just the kind of attitude I've always tried to have at college. Whatever I'm doing, whatever I'm studying, I've always made sure to pretend that my work truly matters. Even if a paper's just going into the bottom of a professor's drawer, I've always written it like it was going to be taken seriously by people with the power to act on it. Even if a project would end with the semester, I've tried to pursue it as if it would continue far into the future. Everything I've done I've done like it really mattered to the world. Every staff I've spun, I've spun like it was on fire.

I look forward to being a lawyer. I can't wait to go out into the world with the skills that will allow me to make a difference, to do real things, to finally spin with a staff on fire. Until then, I look forward to going to law school, and being surrounded by people who feel the same way.

